

THE  
MASONIC MISCELLANY,

AND

LADIES' LITERARY MAGAZINE.

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VOL. II.

FOR MAY, 1823.

No. 11.

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A MASONIC ORATION

*Delivered by JOHN ELLIOTT, Esq. at the new Church in the city of Mobile, on the 27th December A. L. 5822, the anniversary of St. John, the Evangelist.*

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF  
MOBILE LODGE, NO. 10.

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BROTHERS.—

The honor of being called to address you on this occasion, is somewhat qualified by the consideration, that the subject to which our thoughts are to be directed, has been so often discussed, that no new argument can be advanced to gratify the ear of curiosity—and no additional lustre given to an art, which has already occupied abler pens, and more commanding powers of mind. The greatness of the subject is such, as to require corresponding greatness of intellect. Disadvantageous as this may appear, it affords no reason why we should discontinue the celebration of this anniversary.

Had I no other purpose in view, but to interest your affections in behalf of this institution, I need go no farther than to trust to your own convictions and experience. You have hitherto, and now behold, one of the most pleasing and affecting sights, which can be exhibited to the benevolent eye: the establishment of a masonic edifice, at a spot, once subjected to despotic rule, to shelter and protect those, whom misfortune and adversity, have left exposed to every rude and noxious blast.

My respected Audience,

You see before you a band of brothers, connected with each other by the firmest engagements, and most affectionate ties. Warmed with the most general philanthropy, they profess to unite their endeavours in the benevolent design of assisting the perfection of the human character, and the harmony and happiness of society. Their Institution boasts its origin in the earliest ages of the world; its venerable rites and expressive symbols unchanged, and its primeval ceremonies entire. The stupendous pyramids, which were raised; the lofty obelisks inscribed, and the magnificent Temples built by Masonic hands, have yielded to the ravages of time, but the institution itself has survived their overthrow, and outlived their glory. Had we leisure, it would be an interesting and entertaining research, to trace its progress through the various stages of society, it has successively improved and adorned—To see its early honors in Egypt—its consecration at Jerusalem—Its preservation and extension “in ages long gone by.” It is true, that recurring to some periods of its remote history, we should have to lament, that the unfounded and illiberal prejudices of too many, which it could not soften; and their corrupt passions which it could not subdue, at times denied the craft its merited honors—opposed its cause, and impeded its progress. Like the “Sun” its emblem, it has at times been obscured—The clouds of error, and the darkness of ignorance have overshadowed its lustre; but from the temporary penumbra, it always emerged with increased splendour: and though from low and illiterate minds, mists of prejudice may still arise, and dim the clearness of its horizon before the meridian light of reason, truth and wisdom, they will quickly disappear.

In the dark ages, Freemasonry only yielded a faint and glimmering radiance: a light that shined in a “dark place”—but when the gloom of ignorance and barbarism was dispelled, it revived with renovated glory and consequence.

Brothers! we have assembled to celebrate the festival of St. John the Evangelist—Holy St. John, the Patron of our order, with the more express purpose of calling into exercise the virtues which he, invariably loved and practised, “*benevolence*



and charity," the distinguishing characteristics of the Masonic Institution. The state of human existence is such, that mankind are, in some respects, dependent on each other, in nearly, if not in all the relations of civil life—hence arise those natural obligations, by which, not only the members of a neighbourhood, or society, but the citizens of a nation are bound, naturally, to subserve each others' interests, and promote each others' happiness. But, notwithstanding its nature, multitudes of the human family seldom feel its force, or comply with its requisitions—hence the unfortunate sufferer often wanders through the world unpitied and forlorn. *There are unfortunate sufferers, and such there will be till the end of time.* Notwithstanding all human foresight, prudence, and provident care, individuals are exposed in numerous ways, to be suddenly precipitated from a state of affluence, to penury and want—hence, the virtuous citizen may be thrown into circumstances, in which he shall have a just claim for charitable assistance. It is the glory of a nation or society, to have its citizens or members kindly disposed, mutually to rejoice, or sympathize together—a charitable disposition, in view of the world, marks a character of true benevolence and worth, and draws kind benedictions on the memory. "Charity is a shining virtue, adorns our nature, comports with the feelings of humanity, and is deeply characteristic of true benevolence of heart—hence Masonry, as a charitable institution, aside from all other consideration, is justly entitled to the approbation of mankind—In this society, funds are expressly reserved for charitable purposes—although indigent members, their widows and orphans are first to be considered, and first to be relieved, yet Masonic charity is not wholly confined to the circle of brotherhood—wherever suffering humanity is found, there is an object, which touches the Masonic heart with sympathy, excites his compassion, and is promptly relieved. The experience of ages can testify to this excellent practice, in a manner never to be forgotten—ask the war-worn soldier, who from the fate of arms, has been dragged from the country he loved, and the family he adored, whose interference has released him from captivity, whose charity nourished his famished life, and restored him to the dear objects of his affection? Ask the grief worn, broken-hearted

widow? And the wandering, famishing orphan, naked, friendless and destitute, who has fed and clothed, provided for and protected him? Ask such, who has been a father to the fatherless? With emotions of gratitude, which nearly forbid utterance, will they falter out the name of *Mason*, and point to their *benefactors*.

After what has been said, in relation to some of the principles embraced in the masonic system, it may not be improper, briefly, to shew their coincidence with divine revelation.

Masonic faith acknowledges the Holy Bible to be the word of God—that it was written by persons divinely inspired, and reveals the whole duty of man. Let us therefore, candidly, compare the Masonic system, with that standard of truth. That sacred volume clearly, reveals the existence of one supreme eternal God. The Masonic system is first opened to the view of every member, by a solemn acknowledgment of this fundamental truth. The scriptures enjoin supreme love to God, and universal benevolence to all mankind—These are the first duties impressed on the heart of a Mason. *Inspiration* urges the exercise of brotherly love—*Masonry* considers the whole human family as brethren, and imperiously enjoins mutual and reciprocal acts of friendship and affection. We cannot too often repeat, that while our institution is known to require a firm belief in the existence; a devout reverence for the character and a cheerful obedience to the laws of the supreme architect of the universe, the eternal God! While it is evidently, built upon, and venerates “the holy scriptures,” that construction must be a forced one, indeed, which imputes to it principles and plans of irreligious tendency. If it were an immoral, or antichristian association, how happens it, that so many of the clergy are not only its members, but zealously attached to it; not only its apologists, but its patrons.

The more prominent features of a true masonic character, are literally marked with the highest beauties. They are such as will survive the ruins of a perishable world, and shine with increasing lustre, when time shall have merged in the ocean of eternity—hence the general diffusion of the royal art, through almost every part of the habitable world. At the present, as in every former age, over which it hath spread its principles, *Masonry* constitutes the affectionate and indissoluble alliance



which unites man in warm cordiality with man. It forms the most liberal and extensive connections. In its solemn assembly, around its social altar, it meets the inhabitants of different countries, with benignant looks of esteem, and sentiments of unfeigned friendship; around distant lands it casts "Philanthropy's connecting Zone;" and binds together, in the same sympathies, the whole family on earth. Its laws are reason and equity. Its principles, benevolence and charity; and its religion, purity and truth. Its intention is peace on earth, and its disposition, good will towards all men. While Masonry thus aids the cause of virtue, by giving additional weight to moral obligations, it promotes public happiness by enjoining a ready submission to the wholesome laws and regulations of civil society—with religion, whose *sublime doctrines* it cannot encrease, whose noble *precepts* it cannot improve, and whose sanctions it dare not adjudge.

Brethren! You this day assemble to celebrate the ancient reputation and usefulness of Masonry, and to pay the tribute of affectionate remembrance to its departed patrons and brethren, Let hilarity, therefore, be tempered with thoughtfulness. Let virtue chasten your pleasures, and it will give them a higher relish. While you commemorate the wisdom and glory of Solomon, the fidelity of Hiram and the virtues of St. John, you will join also in celebrating the valor of Warren, the wisdom of Franklin—and add to all your songs, the chorus of acknowledgment and affectionate respect to our deceased patron and brother, Washington—the friend of masonry, of his country, and of man. This great and immortal character was a freemason: that father of our country's salvation was our brother: in him was combined every excellence of character, in the field, in the cabinet, and in the church. He was one of our fairest, brightest, greatest ornaments. If such men have not only honored the society with their presence, but sanctioned the institution by precept and example, who shall presume to condemn it, when it tends to inspire the mind with the most exalted ideas of God, and leads to the exercise of the most sublime piety? A reverence for the Supreme Being, the Great Architect of Nature, is the elemental life, the primordial source of all its principles; the very spring and fountain of all its virtues.

Brethren! In the foregoing remarks, you have been presented with some of the general outlines of masonry. You have seen, without a descriptive elucidation of the tenets of our order, how numerous, solemn and interesting, are the considerations involved in our profession; and you may easily discover, from the nature and moral fitness of those principles, which constitute the principal foundation of the institution, how inestimable is their importance to the world. As well informed masons, you can take a retrospective view, and see in how great a variety of instances, the moral state of the world has been benefited by the existence of this ancient association.

Go on, therefore, in the pathway of virtue. Raise your admiring views, and look abroad in the vast fields of masonic research. Look through the forms of masonry, to the substance; through the symbols, contemplate their high and sacred allusions. Nor is this the end of your duty—You may still look forward in boundless prospect. Direct your attention, for instance, to the apostacy of our first parents. This melancholy event is so strikingly represented, as seldom to fail of making deep and lasting impressions on the heart. “The wretched and deplorable situation of Adam, which was the fruit of his disobedience, are affectingly exhibited by the most lively masonic representations. In view of this state, naked and exposed to divine displeasure, the candidate is constrained to look forward to the great fountain and source whence all his temporal as well as spiritual wants may be supplied.” A series of emblematical explanations succeed, by which the mind is induced to perceive, that a sense of human accountability, and an obedience to divine commands, is to characterize us, whilst travelling the rugged paths of life. To impress on our minds, in a deep and lasting manner, that the “all seeing eye is upon us; that nothing can be hidden from the searcher of all hearts, whose justice is equally commensurate with his other attributes.” And as life is short, and rapidly drawing to a close, we need the “anchor of a well-grounded hope,” that when we launch into eternity, we may arrive on those peaceful shores, where the “wicked cease from troubling, and the weary find eternal rest.” However desirous we may be of long life, we must acknowledge,



that but small is the portion of pure and unmixed happiness, which we here enjoy. Even the most prosperous have their share of suffering. Solomon, king of Israel, one of the great founders of our order, who enjoyed every thing his heart could desire, under the sun; who sought for happiness in power, in knowledge, in fame and in pleasure, declared that "all was vanity and vexation of spirit." On our entrance into the busy scenes of life, we imagine the prospect before us to be altogether fair and beautiful; strewed with roses, where no thorn is found, and filled on every side with sources of enjoyment. But, no sooner do we become engaged in them, than cares and toils, in succession, cloud our sky—the tender buds of hope are nipped by the killing frost of disappointment—and the airy visions of youthful expectation are dissolved by the touches of real life.

Brothers! The great objection which has been so often made to our institution, is the secrecy of our proceeding—that we have laws which are not to be divulged, and meetings removed from the eye of the inquisitive. Such an objection may excite fear in the breast of the tyrant, whose throne totters under him—whose feeble arm is unable to wield the sceptre which he holds; but scarcely deserves attention in a land of freedom. By their *actions*, all men ought to be judged; and to them, the members of the society need not be afraid to appeal. Universal experience proves, that our meetings have never been prostituted to purposes hurtful to society. In no age nor nation, have the assemblies of the brotherhood become the seats of sedition, or the scenes of intrigue. Like every other society, we have secrets and signs of distinction, which, upon application, may be made known to the duly qualified; but these regard only ourselves. As far as the world is concerned, our grand secret is "Love:—Love, the cement of society, and the balm of life: Love, that adamant chain, which reaches from heaven to earth, and binds the universe together:—Love, eternal as God himself—without beginning, and without end." In short, I repeat, our fundamental principles differ in nothing from those of our religion. So much, indeed, are they the same, that he, who is a good *free-mason*, will not be a *bad christian*. Though we are *masons*, and, as such, hold no communion with the world—our

thoughts are not circumscribed to the *Lodge alone*, nor are we precluded from wandering in search of objects, to multiply happiness, or delight our senses. As masons, we are fettered by no wonderful restraints; but indulge in those gratifications, and participate in those enjoyments, which reason commends, and virtue dictates to rational minds. We make no pompous display around our acts of benevolence. Suffering humanity, every where, claims our sympathy. A needy brother never makes an appeal to us in vain—"When his *working tools* become too ponderous for him to wield, we extended a *willing hand* to his assistance—When the clouds of misfortune and distress burst over his head, he is protected by our beneficent hands. How bright and cheering to a dying mason, is the consciousness, that he leaves behind him a band of brothers, who will, in the time of need, relieve the wants of his family, pay the customary rite due to his mortal remains, and "hallow the turf which pillows his head."

Permit me to conclude this discourse, with observing to the honour of your institution, that, on this grand festival, you should piously join trembling with mirth; that within these sacred walls, dedicated to Almighty God, you engage in his service, and acknowledge your dependence on him, before you proceed to partake his bounty. Let the same principle of religion actuate the whole of your proceedings on this day, and teach you the wisdom of moderation. Under these limitations, I know no principle in the order to which you belong, nor in the religion which you profess, prohibiting an innocent indulgence in the lawful enjoyments of life. To every one who acts up to the principles of masonry, the words of the preacher may be applied: "Go thy way—eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God accepteth thy works." And with regard to every one of us, may he so accept our work of faith, and labour of love, that when this earthly tabernacle be dissolved, we may find a place in that eternal house, which the great Architect of Nature has framed, with this joyful welcome—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou here into the joy of thy lord." With such prospects before you, you may steer through life, evincing a magnanimity of heart, and a devo



tion to masonry, worthy of yourselves, and honourable to the fraternity. "Guided by the *plumb line* of conscious rectitude, and directed by the square and compass, you can mark out and circumscribe your way to the portals of that temple, which is consecrated to Faith, Hope, and Charity,"—where the fair will, with "ivory fingers," "weave the garland of renown" around the brows of the faithful; while the pathway which leads to heaven will be strewn with flowers of every hue—and delicious fragrance, calculated to allure the earthly sojourner to the abodes of ceaseless joy; tuned to the celestial strains of harmony and love.

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FROM THE MASONIC CASKET.  
AN ORATION,

*Delivered at North Woodstock, Connecticut, June 27th, 1821, by  
ASA CHILD, A. B. Member of New-Haven Council of Select  
Masters.*

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The moral world presents a scene, of endless variety. Whether in the school of discipline, the social circle, or the scenes of active life, men exhibit a great inequality. Such is the state of feeling among the various ranks in society, that, between the "high and the low, the rich and the poor," there exists an almost impassible barrier. The summit of human society, like the pinnacle of some lofty mountain, is scarcely accessible by the humble inhabitants of the vale below. From men in the lower ranks of life, the presence of those in exalted stations is withheld, and, like the golden apples of fable, "guarded by the dragons of insolence and pride."

In this state of the world, it is a source of happiness to man, that communities exist in which are inculcated benevolence and brotherly love; and where all can meet on a level and hold communion with each other, no less the king on his throne than the peasant in his cottage. Such is the Church of Christ: such, my audience, is the Masonic Institution. The one divine; the other human. The one founded upon the rock of ages, and

secured by the promise of God, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: the other, founded upon the principles of the Bible, but organized by the voluntary association of men.

Between the two institutions, I forbear a comparison.—It would be irreverence to place the wisdom of men in competition with the wisdom of God: but of the *lives* of the vital Christian and the genuine Mason, I will freely say, that no man can be a Mason at heart without being a Christian in practice;—no man can be a Christian at heart without being a Mason in practice. Yes! as a system of moral conduct, the principles of Masonry afford a perfect rule. But for a system of faith, as a professor of the religion of Immanuel, show I unto you a more excellent way: and in the language of the pious WATTS I would say—

“Should all the forms that men devise  
Assault my *faith* with treacherous art,  
I’d call them vanity and lies,  
And bind the gospel to my heart.”

I discard the idea that, as moral and accountable beings, we have discharged our duty by obtaining a membership in the Masonic institution. No! I regard the institution of Free-masonry as a moral institution, in excellence without a parallel, and a subsidiary to the Church of God. The mistaken zeal which has induced some of the fraternity to contend that the institution is divine,\* and that it has superseded the Church, has but shown their ignorance of the principles of our order, and cast a stain upon the Masonic character. To these sentiments, no enlightened, well informed Mason will subscribe. It is true that the principles inculcated in the Masonic institution are divine; they are sanctioned by the holy religion of the gospel. But it is not true that there was a divine agency in the organization of the society. Though the ancient temple of the Lord was built under the immediate direction of Heaven, yet the preparations for its accomplishment, and the arrangement of the craft, were made

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by the wisdom of Solomon. This institution then, is a human institution, founded on the principles of virtue and religion. As an illustration of my ideas, take for an example, the American Bible Society. No one will contend that this institution is divine, yet no Christian will deny that its principles are sanctioned by the Word of God. Here, then, is an institution founded in consistency with the will of Heaven, but organized by the voluntary association of men. So is the Masonic institution founded in consistency with the will of Almighty God, but organized by man.

With these remarks, I shall now consider the origin, the progress, and the nature of the Masonic institution. That the principles of Masonry were known to Enoch, were patronized by Noah, Abraham, and David, is evident from the sacred scriptures. But these men were Masons in the same sense in which Abraham was a member of the Church. "The Church of God, compared to the moon," says a writer, "had her first quarter previous to the calling of Abraham, her second, from Abraham to Moses; and upon the introduction of the legal dispensation, she appeared full orb'd. From the days of Solomon she began to wane, had her last quarter after the building of the second temple, and changed when Christ finished his ministry." But in what part of the sacred volume do you read of the Church as an organized society, until the advent of the Messiah? Abraham, it is true, was a member of the Church, but he was a member of the Church in no other manner than as he was influenced by her divine precepts. Nor was Enoch a Mason in any other sense than as he was a patron of the principles of the fraternity. But that Solomon was the founder of the institution, and the first master of the craft, is a position, which I claim to be true.

Although some, from their zeal for Masonry, have contended for the existence of the society previous to the erection of the temple, I am unable to conceive how a well informed Mason can sanction the doctrine. Who, that has received the sublime degree of a Master Mason, does not know that all the circumstances on which that and the preceding degrees were founded, originated during the building of the temple?

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The erection of the house of the Lord by king Solomon, and the circumstances attending it, involve the foundation of this society. Solomon, by whose wisdom this superb model of excellence was erected; Hiram, king of Tyre, who supported him in his arduous undertaking; and Hiram, the widow's son, by whose art the temple was adorned, are represented by the three first officers of the Lodge. By the principles upon which they acted, in the erection of this splendid edifice, our officers are governed. By those rules of order and subordination, by which one hundred and fifty-three thousand three hundred men, were so classed and arranged, that neither envy nor discord disturbed their tranquillity, by those feelings of friendship and brotherly love, which inspired their bosoms during this enterprize, as Masons, we profess to be governed. Such is the foundation of the Masonic institution; and while through a succession of ages, Masonry was regarded as operative; many speculative principles were inculcated, to illustrate the excellence of virtue and the beauty of holiness. It would be an unwarranted presumption that Solomon, a man inspired with divine wisdom, and employed in erecting a house for the worship of Jehovah, retained the craft seven years in his service without impressing upon their minds the importance of religious truth. Nay! many of the ceremonies at the temple were typical of the great truths of the christian system. As Masons, we have conclusive evidence that the institution has existed, in some form or other, since the days of Solomon. The original landmarks of the order we firmly believe have been transmitted to us through a chosen few, "unchanged by time and uncontrolled by prejudice." If the inhabitants of several different countries who had been secluded from all intercourse with each other, should testify that a particular event happened three hundred years ago, and should agree in the time, place, and all the important circumstances, we could have no doubt of its truth. It is a kind of evidence which produces positive conviction. As Masons, we possess interesting facts, unknown to the world, which are stated to have originated at the building of the temple. The same facts are in the possession of Masons in different countries, among which, if history be true, there has been no intercourse since the period to which I have alluded. Now, if



the valuable information which we have received by Masonic tradition existed only in our own country, or in that from which we received it, we might have ground for the suspicion that it was fabricated. But when we find the same facts in almost every country on the globe, agreeing in all essential points, the conclusion is irresistible that they are true. One man may fabricate a statement; but that three men, who had had no knowledge of each other's views and motives, should fabricate the same statement, and should not only agree in the facts stated, but in the very time and place of their accomplishment, is in the highest degree improbable. The chances that they would not agree are infinitely greater than the chances that they would agree. There is then, in the language of logicians a moral impossibility that the information with which we are made acquainted on our advancement to the third degree of Masonry, should be false. Yes! my brethren, there is almost demonstrative evidence that the facts conveyed to you in the lecture on the Master's degree are true.

By the same process of reasoning are we satisfied of the truth of the history of Royal Arch Masonry. This degree originated four hundred and seventy years after the circumstances on which the Master's degree was founded; and though the number thro' whose fidelity we have received its information be less, yet the identity of the facts, in different countries, and among men of different languages, affords overwhelming evidence of their truth.

The origin of Royal Arch Masonry we trace to the erection of the second temple. In the fulfilment of prophecy, the founders of this degree repaired from Babylon to Jerusalem, and rebuilt the house of the Lord. We find from the Scriptures, that many who offered their services were deprived of the privilege of aiding in this great and glorious work. Now if we had no other evidence, is it not a reasonable conjecture that those who enjoyed this privilege, adopted some means of distinguishing each other from the rest of the world? We have not only strong presumptive evidence that this was the fact, but, as is believed by every well informed Companion, we have the testimony of the word of God. Yes! the reality of Royal Arch

Masonry we believe to be clearly taught in the Bible. How interesting to every philanthropist, to every Christian, is the information contained in this degree! As Royal Arch Masons, we possess facts respecting the law and the testimony, which induce the belief that a copy of this sacred book was concealed by the founders of the Masonic institution, and that it was found during the erection of the second temple, through the influence of Haggai, Zechariah, and Zerubbabel, who were the founders of this sublime degree. The testimony of the sacred scriptures is not inconsistent with Masonic tradition. We read nothing of the ark, or the law contained in it, from the time of Josiah, until the days of Ezra, a period of 180 years. There can be little doubt that the original copy of the law was destroyed with the ark of the covenant, by the Chaldeans, when they besieged the city, destroyed the temple, and took away all the holy vessels of the Lord. Had this valuable treasure been rescued, so important an event would not have escaped the notice of the inspired historian. But as Select Masters, we believe, that, inspired with a spirit of prophecy, and apprehensive of the danger to which the children of Israel were exposed, the founders of this institution took the precaution that a copy of the law should be deposited under a secret arch, beneath the temple of the Lord. In these facts, as Masons, our belief is established. As an individual, I declare, in this public manner, as one who feels that he has the character of a Christian, of a Mason, and of a man, to support, that I believe these things to be true. As the appointed organ of the communication of my brethren this day, I declare to you, in their name, that they believe these things to be true.

My audience, do you think us sincere in our professions? Do you think we believe what we thus publicly profess to believe? From what motive could those who stand before you in the character of Masons, wish to deceive their fellow men. Are there not those of whose integrity, nay of whose piety, you entertain a favorable opinion? I will no longer suppose that you distrust the word of every Mason: I will no longer suppose that you regard all the members of this fraternity so void of moral principles, so lost to a sense of virtue, as to make these hypocritical pretensions to what they do not believe.



Our information, then, is a reality, or our members are deceived. But will any candid person maintain, that every Mason is so void of intellect, as to be so easily deceived? Men of the most brilliant talents, sound minds and discriminating judgments, have been patrons of this institution: Have they all been deceived? Are all who now frequent our assemblies deceived? The question need only be stated to receive an answer. With this evidence, we cannot but be satisfied that our ideas of the origin of the institution are correct.

History affords abundant evidence of the existence of the society, from the period to which I have alluded, and after the completion of the temple, the Tyrians, who had been engaged in that enterprize returned to their native country. We are informed by De Goguet, a distinguished writer, that many of the Jews who were employed at the building of the temple, and who must have been acquainted with all the circumstances which transpired at that time, emigrated to Phœnicia, a country of which Tyre was the principal city. Oppressed by their enemies, and exposed to trials and danger, they sought an asylum among the inhabitants of that city. Reminded of the pleasing scenes which they had witnessed on the sacred Mount of Moriah, and influenced by those feelings of friendship and brotherly love, which seven years residence together had inspired, the Tyrians furnished them with ships, in which they passed the Straits of Hercules, and settled in Spain. We are assured by Strabo that colonies were established by the inhabitants of Palestine on the western coast of Africa, about one hundred and ninety years after the Trojan war; that is, fourteen years after the dedication of king Solomon's temple. It is then an established historical fact, that men in the possession of those valuable secrets on which the six first degrees of Masonry were founded, settled in various parts of the world. It is equally authenticated, that Masons in all parts of the world possess the same facts. The conclusion, then, is irresistible, that our Masonic information is true; and, if so, that the institution commenced with king Solomon.

But history stops not here. Prideaux informs us, that there existed among the Jews, immediately after the completion of the second temple, an association of men, called Massorites, who

professed to be in possession of facts unknown to the world. Godwyn speaks of the same society, and observes that their name was derived from a Hebrew word, signifying "tradition." Of this society Ezra was president, and was engaged several years, with his brethren, in transcribing and arranging the law and the testimony. The circumstances under which this society appears, on the records of history, are such as to leave little doubt on my mind that it is identified with the Masonic fraternity.

In the progress of the institution from that time, there is no doubt that its principles became amalgamated with the mysteries of the ancients. It is a historical fact which I am bound to admit, that long before the advent of the Messiah, the institution was involved in the grossest absurdities. Many errors, both in sentiment and practice, were inculcated, which would now shock the christian Mason. But before we condemn the society, let us look at the state of the world at that period. All was involved in darkness and superstition. Altars for idol worship were erected on the ruins of the temples of Jehovah. The shackles of idolatry and polytheism were strongly riveted upon the world. It is not surprising, then, that this institution was affected by these disorders. In this period of universal darkness, when all things bore the marks of moral desolation, bad as the institution of Masonry was, the only correct ideas of God and morality were there inculcated. Yes! my audience, it is a fact known to all who are acquainted with history, that amidst the overwhelming darkness of the age, some taint rays emanated from this institution. "Those initiated into these mysteries," says Cicero, "were instructed in the unity of God, and had some correct views of his attributes." In another place, speaking of the institution, the same author observes: "Among many other advantages which we have derived from it, this is the greatest: It has not only taught us to live cheerfully, but to die in the hope of a glorious immortality." The fact, then, appears to be this: the Masonic institution, at that period, was much corrupted, but less so than the rest of the world.

But during the period of Masonic darkness, which existed before the advent of the Messiah, while destruction threatened



the institution, that eminent patron of Christianity and Masonry, whose birth we this day celebrate, appeared on the earth. With a leathern girdle about his loins, and feeding upon locusts and wild honey, he preached the gospel doctrine; Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This was the era in the history of Masonry, when the pollutions of heathenism were wiped from the Masonic character. This was the era when the original principles of the society were again revived, and the minds of the fraternity prepared for the advent of the Saviour. Well might they rejoice, on hearing the joyful accents from his lips, that the fulfilment of the prophecy was at hand; "Unto you a child is born, unto you a son is given." Well might they rejoice in anticipation of a morn, infinitely more blessed than that on which the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Well may we this day celebrate a jubilee in commemoration of the divine mission of John the Baptist.

It now remains that I consider the nature and object of this institution. In this inquiry we are more particularly interested. The origin of the society is of far less interest to us than its object. Though this society, as I have already shown, has, by no means superseded the Church; yet it claims the privilege of being the humble auxiliary in her cause. Yes! my audience, love to God, and love to man, are the two grand pillars on which rests the Masonic fabric. No man enters the Lodge without expressing his belief in the Lord Jehovah, and professedly reposing confidence in his holy Name. The solemn duty of invoking the blessing of God upon all his pursuits, is the first lesson taught the newly initiated Mason. In the most impressive manner is the Master Mason reminded of the certainty and the solemnity of death. By a reminiscence of the interesting scenes which he has witnessed every brother will bear me testimony, that while on our advancement to the third degree of Masonry, we are reminded of the grave, to which all are exposed; we are taught to relinquish the arm of flesh, and trust alone in the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Yes! in language more forcible than tongue can express, are we taught the impressive truth, "Where shall we go, but unto thee; thou hast the words of eternal life." However

"*amiable*," "*distinguished*," or "*exemplary*" may have been our characters, we are shown that these qualities will not save us, but that in Jehovah's name alone must we hope. Though death may await us, though the grave may receive our bodies, we are here reminded, that we have precious and immortal souls, which can never, never, never die. With the Holy Bible, that great light in Masonry, which is indispensable to the existence of a well-governed Lodge, every candidate is presented. By the precepts of this sacred book, he is taught to regulate his conduct and intercourse in the world. Charity, that heaven-born virtue, is written as with sun beams, upon every Masonic altar. In the most solemn manner, every Mason is reminded of his duty to his fellow men, and taught to relieve their sufferings.

Every genuine Mason feels himself bound, in duty, to administer to the wants of his brethren. When in difficulty or danger, the worthy brother feels an implicit confidence in the fidelity of Masons. All diversity of opinion, both in religion and politics is left at the threshold of the Lodge; and at the altar of friendship every Mason greets his companion and brother. Though the rancour of party has disturbed the harmony of every other institution, here is a society, co-extensive with the civilized world, where the bonds of union have never been severed. Now, I appeal to every candid mind; would a fraternity, hostile to moral rectitude, and subversive of civil government, have so long preserved its unity and the universality of its influence? How loud in its praise is the fact, that its members, dispersed through the world, are all in fellowship with each other, and attached to each other's interest. In whatever country, or whatever clime, the worthy Mason is cast, he finds a brother who will extend the arm of friendship, and alleviate his wants. Though a stranger in a foreign land, if he can speak the comprehensive language of Masonry, he finds an acquaintance, and a friend. Not only Masons, but their bosom companions and suffering children enjoy these privileges. The fact that this woman is the wife of a Mason, or that child the orphan of a Brother, secures them the benevolence of the fraternity. Let not the companions of Masons undervalue the institution, for in



their welfare every Brother is interested; to them too is he united by the bond of Masonic union. Not a Lodge can be found which cannot produce at least one widow, as a cheerful witness of the benevolence of Masons. Often has this charity entered the humble cottage, and administered the balm of consolation to the afflicted mother. Often, through its influence, have the accents of joy and gladness dropped from the lips of suffering orphans. Often have the prison doors been opened and the innocent captive liberated, by the arm of a Brother. Often, even in the heat of battle, has the intended blow of an enemy been stayed by the sign of a Mason. The banks of Lake George have witnessed a Putnam rescued from the tortures of savage cruelty and the blow of the Indian tomahawk, by the powerful arm of Masonry. What even the calls of humanity could not effect, has been accomplished by the influence of this institution. When extended upon the rack, and his body pierced with nails and with spears, a Coustus has been rescued from that hellish engine, the Inquisition of Spain, by the influence of Masons.

But notwithstanding the excellence and known benefits of the order, many have exerted their talents and influence in opposing its prosperity. To the trite objection, if Masonry be of such importance, why not impart the blessing to the world? I shall only reply—we *cannot*. As we have received, so alone can we give. If the objection be valid, it is chargeable, not upon the institution but upon its founders. Grant the validity of the objection, and charge the objection upon that man who, instead of riches and honor, asked wisdom of God; and forever after hold your peace. While we find Masons in almost every country, we are met with this objection: You profess to be governed by the principles of religion; but there are Masons in countries which have no knowledge of God, or the Bible. To this objection I reply, by a denial of the fact. That there are Masons in countries unenlightened by the Sun of Righteousness, I allow; but in no nation on the globe are Masons to be found, who have not some written or traditionary account of the law of Moses, and those parts of sacred history which relate to the Jews. I do not say that Masons in all countries have a correct knowledge of these things; but I do say, that in no country do Masons exist

who have not some correct ideas of the character of God, and some traditions, at least of some parts of the Bible. Instead of an objection, then, this is a conclusive argument in favour of the institution.

But it is said, the lives of many of your members are inconsistent with such principles. The assertion is true. It is a fact lamented by every worthy brother, that so many men are within the pale of the Lodge who are a disgrace to the name of Mason. But will you condemn the institution because there are disorderly members? Will you condemn the Church of Christ because there are disorderly professors, or because a Judas sat at the paschal feast? There are members of the church who are not Christians; so there are members of this fraternity, who are not Masons. If there be found among our number, the man who treats with irreverence the sacred name of Jehovah, or from whose lips drop cursing and profaneness, that man is not a Mason. If there be one who ridicules the ordinances of the gospel, or who does not venerate the Bible as the word of God, that man is not a Mason. If there be one who scoffs at the progress of vital religion and true morality, or who reviles the pious ministers at the altar of God, that man is not a Mason. If there be one who is repeatedly engaged in scenes of drunkenness and dissipation, or who is frequently seen at the gambling table, that man is not a Mason. Men of this character may be found among our number; if so, God forbid that I should stand here to justify them. No! I have a duty to discharge to the constitution of Masonry, my conscience, and my God: I stand here to condemn them. Grant that bad members have been found in this society; but consider, on the other hand, the many worthies who have been ornaments of the fraternity. Men distinguished for their talents and for their piety, have, in all ages been patrons of the institution. How many pious ministers of the gospel, and missionaries of the cross too, have been made acquainted with the mysteries of Masonry, and testified to their excellence! The father of his country, the hero whose ashes now lie entombed on Vernon's Mount,—the immortal Washington, was a Mason. The soldier who fought the battles of his country, and whose heart's blood was shed on Bunker's hill,—the valiant Warren,



was a Mason. The brightest ornament of American science, the philosopher who could control the lightening of heaven,—the eminent Franklin, was a Mason. The statesman, to whose counsels a debt of gratitude is due from every friend of liberty,—the great, though unfortunate Hamilton, was a Mason. The orator who pleaded the cause of American freedom, and by whose eloquence a spirit of loyalty to Britain was converted into a desire of independence—Patrick Henry, was a Mason. That European prince who has for years been conspicuous in the cause of Christianity and whose influence has been felt by many a benighted heathen,—Alexander of Russia, is a Mason. Permit me to mention one more living witness, a minister of the cross of Christ from whose desk are declared the soul humbling doctrines of the gospel, and whose life well comports with the doctrines which he preaches.—Milner, is a Mason.

Though the testimony of great and good men, in all ages, has been in favour of the Masonic Institution, yet many, without reserve, have denounced it as having a demoralizing tendency. The assertion has been made from the sacred desk, that to become a Mason was to relinquish all just claims to the christian character. Yes! many whose duty requires them to publish the glad tidings of salvation to the mortals around them, have so far departed from their holy calling as to revile an institution of which they are even professedly ignorant. Painful is the reflection to every christian Mason, but it is yet true, that many who profess to be the followers of the meek and low Jesus, never speak of the institution of Freemasonry but with derision and abuse. Such conduct better becomes the infidel, or the libertine, than the professed follower of the Lamb of God. By so doing, they wound the cause of that religion which they profess to honor. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, that the greatest opposers to Masonry have been found in the Christian Church. But show me the humble christian, the man who lives under the influence of vital religion, and who honors his God in all his ways, and I will show you a man, who, if he be not interested in the Institution of Freemasonry, is silent respecting it. To those who indulge themselves in unreservedly casting contempt upon this society,

would say, beware; the ground on which you stand may be holy. For such conduct, I impeach you in the name of justice, whose laws you violate, and whose dictates you disregard. I impeach you in the name of distressed widows and orphans, whose daily bread has been supplied by an institution which you are endeavouring to destroy. I impeach you in the name of the Church of God, whose interest you injure, and whose influence you weaken. I impeach you in the name of the Bible, from whose pages is continually sounded in your ears the divine declaration, "though I give my body to be burned, and all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, I am as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." Let every person candidly examine this subject; let him reflect that he is speaking against that of which he is wholly ignorant; let him consider that he does cast a scandal upon the cause of virtue; and then judge of the expediency of such conduct. Ye professors of the soul humbling doctrine of the Bible, I appeal to you.—Ye ministers of the holy altar of Christianity, I appeal to you.—Ye members of the venerable Synod at Pittsburgh, I appeal to you.

*Right Worshipful Master—*

*Wardens and Worthy Brethren—*

I congratulate you on the flourishing state of Masonry in our own country. The present is an interesting era in its history. Our members are awaking to a sense of duty. The pollution of vice, with which the institution, in times past, has been corrupted, are now fading from the Masonic character. The influence of bigotry and superstition is diminishing in the world. The time is within the recollection of some of you, my brethren, and our fathers have told us all, of the period when the King and the Bishop, the Peer and the Priest, conspired to obliterate the name of Mason: but we can now sit under our own vine and fig-tree, with none to molest, or to make us afraid.

Although the Masonic character is brightening in the world; although much has been done to reform the abuses of the order; yet errors still exist among us. Permit me, therefore, my brethren, though a younger brother, to address you with the freedom of a Mason, and let me not become your enemy because



I tell you the truth. Our discipline is neglected;—our members are suffered to injure the institution by a disorderly walk. I now publicly call upon you, Worshipful Master and Wardens, in the name of the constitution of Masonry to discharge the duty of disciplining your members. I call upon you, ye Fathers in the Institution, to exert your influence in accomplishing this object. I call upon you, ye young men; I call upon every Brother to aid in this work. Brethren this must be done. I reiterate the assertion; this must be done. If there be among us the profane swearer, the drunkard, the gambler, the man of immoral habits, let this be the last time that he shall be ranked as a Mason. Let me entreat you all, my brethren, to take heed how you walk. In the language of a distinguished brother, it is not by mere initiation that you become Masons: You may put on the apron—you may figure in the procession—you may wear the jewels, and bear about the trappings of the order—and still be no Masons. No; it is by your lives that you must testify to the excellence of Masonry. You know, my brethren, what the world does not know, that our Chapters and Lodges are solemnly dedicated to the cause of virtue and benevolence. You know the privileges of the institution. See, then, that you adorn your profession in all things. Before the enemies of Masonry, be silent respecting it. The institution has received great injury by the unsuccessful attempts of weak and uninformed Masons to defend it. If you are not thoroughly acquainted with the principles of the order, silence and circumspection will be your best defence. It is not policy for the uninformed Christian to dispute with an infidel; nor is it policy for the uninformed Mason to dispute with an opposer. Remember your solemn duties to your brethren. To them you are bound by the strongest ties, though always with this provision; "if they be worthy." You are required to whisper good counsel in the ear of a brother, and in the most friendly manner to remind him of his errors. Never bear the character of a worthy brother traduced, without engaging in his defence. Testify to the world, that every worthy Mason has in you a friend and a brother. When you go from this place, to participate in the festivities of the day, guard well your steps: Take heed that you injure not a society which you

know to be good. Remember that you will this day pass thro' the fiery ordeal of ignorance and prejudice. Give no occasion for reproach, but let every thing be done decently and in order.

Finally, Brethren, remember that you have precious and immortal souls, and are fast travelling to eternity. However excellent may be the principles of this fraternity, however salutary may be its influence in the world, build not upon it your hopes of happiness beyond the grave. No! Remember that there is laid in Zion, a Stone, a tried Stone, a sure foundation Stone: On that alone rest your hope of immortal glory. And by a pure heart and well ordered life, may we all be finally admitted into the Holy of Holies above, and there celebrate the praises of the Great High Priest of our profession, throughout the endless ages of eternity.

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#### VALUE OF ASSOCIATIONS.

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The best purposes of life in civil society, have led men to such associations. The mysteries of Greece gave freedom to the spirit even of a philosopher in the days of ancient liberty. Rome consented to accept the gift. Roman citizenship gave a rich value to association in civil society; and the religious orders supported the cause of the church, by extending the same idea to the Christian religion. The Jesuits made the bold experiment of its power, with unexampled success, and might have continued in glory, had they not been perverted by private ambition. Masons have not made a bolder, but safer experiment. Without regard to forms of government, or private opinions, it embraces every where what is happy for man, upon the laws of his own constitution. It puts that as a law, which is found convenient; it takes up so much of the character of man, as agrees with his first duties. It was thus the old Abbe St. Pierre gave the elements of his project for a perpetual peace. It is thus Kent, in the same design, proposes to restore confidence among mankind. Our principles are the sober theory of human nature, which must bless the world.



## LADIES' LITERARY MAGAZINE.

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### THE PIONEERS.

#### EXTRACTS FROM CHAPTERS VII. & VIII. VOL. II.

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The old hunters yielded to his wish, which seemed to be their law. For a short time a profound silence prevailed, during which each man was very busy with his hook and line; but Edwards, probably feeling that it remained with him to renew the discourse, soon observed, with the air of one who knew not what he said—

‘How beautifully tranquil and glassy the lake is. Saw you it ever more calm and even than at this moment, Natty?’

‘I have known the Otsego water for five-and-forty year’ said Leather stocking, ‘and I will say that for it, which is, that a cleaner spring or a better fishing is not to be found in the land. Yes, yes—I had the place to myself once; and a cheerful time I had of it. The game was as plenty as heart could wish, and there was none to meddle with the ground, unless there might have been a hunting party of the Delawares crossing the hills, or, may be, a rifling scout of them thieves, the Iroquois. There was one or two Frenchmen that squatted in the flats, further west, and married squaws; and some of the Scotch Irishers, from the Cherry Valley, would come on to the lake, and borrow my canoe to take a mess of parch, or drop a line for a salmon-trout; but, in the main, it was a cheerful place, and I had but little to disturb me in it. John would come, and John knows.’

Mohegan turned his dark face, at this appeal, and moving his hand forward with a graceful motion of assent, he spoke, using the Delaware language—

'The land was owned by my people: we gave it to my brother, in council—to the Fire-Eater; and what the Delawares give, lasts as long as the waters run. Hawk eye smoked at that council, for we loved him.'

'No, no, John' said Natty, 'I was no chief, seeing that I know'd nothing of scholarship, and had a white skin. But it was a comfortable hunting ground then, lad, and would have been so to this day, but for the money of Marmaduke Temple, and maybe, the twisty ways of the law.'

"It must have been a sight of melancholy pleasure, indeed," said Edwards, while his eye roved along the shores and over the hills where the clearings, groaning with the golden corn, were cheering the forests with the signs of life, "to have roamed over these mountains, and along this sheet of beautiful water, without a living soul to speak to, or to thwart your humour."

"Haven't I said it was cheerful!" said Leather-stocking. "Yes, yes—when the trees begun to be kivered with the leaves, and the ice was out of the lake, it was a second paradise. I have travelled the woods for fifty three year, and have made them my home for more than forty, and I can say that I have met but one place that was more to my liking; and that was only to eyesight, and not for hunting or fishing."

"And where was that?" asked Edwards.

"Where! why up on the Cattskills. I used often to go up into the mountains after wolves' skins, and bears; once they bought me to get them a stuffed painter; and so I often went. There's a place in them hills that I used to climb to, when I wanted to see the carryings on of the world, that would well pay any man for a barked skin or a torn moccasin. You know the Cattskills, lad, for you must have seen them on your left, as you followed the river up from York, looking as blue as a piece of clear sky, and holding the clouds on their tops, as the smoke curls over the head of an Indian chief at a council fire. Well, there's the High peak and the Round top, which lay back, like a father and mother among their children, seeing they are far above all the other hills. But the place I mean is next to the river, where one of the ridges juts out a little from the rest, and where the



rocks fall for the best part of a thousand feet, so much up and down, that a man standing on their edges is fool enough to think he can jump from top to bottom."

"What see you when you get there?" asked Edwards.

"Creation!" said Natty, dropping the end of his rod into the water, and sweeping one hand around him in a circle—"all creation, lad. I was on that hill when Vaughan burnt 'Sopus, in the last war, and I seen the vessels come out of the highlands as plain as I can see that limescow rowing into the Susquehannah, though one was twenty times further from me than the other. The river was in sight for seventy miles, under my feet, looking like a curled shaving, though it was eight long miles to its banks. I saw the hills in the Hampshire grants, the high lands of the river, and all that God had done or man could do, as far as eye could reach—you know that the Indians named me for my sight, lad—and from the flat on the top of that mountain, I have often found the place where Albany stands; and as for 'Sopus! the day the royal troops burnt the town, the smoke seemed so nigh, that I thought I could hear the screeches of the women."

"It must have been worth the toil, to meet with such a glorious view!"

"If being the best part of a mile in the air, and having men's farms and housen at your feet, with rivers looking like ribands, and mountains bigger than the 'Vision,' seeming to be haystacks of green grass under you, gives any satisfaction to a man, I can recommend the spot. When I first come into the woods to live, I used to have weak spells, and I felt lonesome; and then I would go into the Catskill and spend a few days on that hill, to look at the ways of man; but it's now many a year since I felt any such longings, and I'm getting too old for them rugged rocks. But there's a place, a short two miles back of that very hill, that in late times I relished better than the mountain; for it was kivered with the trees, and more natural."

"And where was that?" Inquired Edwards, whose curiosity was strongly excited by the simple description of the hunter.

"Why, there's a fall in the hills, where the water of two little ponds that lie near each other breaks out of their bounds, and runs over the rocks into the valley. The stream is, maybe,

such a one as would turn a mill, if so useless a thing was wanted in the wilderness. But the hand that made that Leap,' never made a mill! There the water comes crooking and winding among the rocks, first so low that a trout could swim in it, and then starting and running just like any creature that wanted to make a far spring, till it gets to where the mountain divides, like the cleft foot of a deer, leaving a deep hollow for the brook to tumble into. The first pitch is nigh two hundred feet, and the water looks like flakes of driven snow, before it touches the bottom; and there the stream gathers together again for a new start, and maybe flutters over 50 feet of flat-rock, before it falls for another hundred, when it jumps about from shelf to shelf, first turning this away and then turning that away, striving to get out of the hollow, till it finally comes to the plain."

"I have never heard of this spot before!" exclaimed Edwards; "it is not mentioned in the books."

"I never read a book in my life," said Leather stocking; "and how should a man who has lived in towns and schools know any thing about the wonders of the woods! No, no lad; there has that little stream of water been playing among them hills, since He made the world, and not a dozen white men have ever laid eyes on it. The rock sweeps like mason-work, in a half-round, on both sides of the fall, and shelves over the bottom for fifty feet: so that when I've been sitting at the foot of the first pitch, and my hounds have run into the caverns behind the sheet of water, they've looked no bigger than so many rabbits. To my judgment, lad, it's the best piece of work that I've met with in the woods; and none know how often the hand of God is seen in the wilderness, but them that rove it for a man's life."

"What becomes of the water? In which direction does it run? Is it a tributary of the Delaware?"

"Anan!" said Natty.

"Does the water run into the Delaware?"

"No, no, it's a drop for the old Hudson; and a merry time it has till it gets down off the mountain. I've sat on the shelving rock many a long hour, boy, and watched the bubbles as they shot by me, and thought how long it would be before that very water, which seemed made for the wilderness, would be under the



bottom of a vessel, and tossing in the salt sea. It is a spot to make a man solemnize. You can see right down into the valley that lies to the east of the High Peak, where, in the fall of the year, thousands of acres of woods are afore your eyes, in the deep hollow, and along the side of the mountain, painted like ten thousand rainbows, by no hand of man, though without the ordering of God's providence."

"Why, you are eloquent, Leather stocking!" exclaimed the youth.

"Anan!" repeated Natty.

"The recollection of the sight has warmed your blood, old man. How many years is it since you saw the place?"

The hunter made no reply; but, bending his ear near to the water, he sat for a minute, holding his breath, and listening attentively, as if to some distant sound. At length he raised his head, said—

"If I hand't fastened the hounds with my own hands, with a fresh leash of green buck-skin, I'd take a bible oath that I heard old Hector ringing his cry on the mountain."

"It is impossible," said Edwards; "it is not an hour since I saw him in his kennel."

By this time the attention of Mohegan was attracted to the sounds; but, notwithstanding the youth was both silent and attentive, he could hear nothing but the lowing of some cattle from the western hills. He looked at the old men, Natty sitting with his hand to his ear, like a trumpet, and Mohegan bending forward, with his arm raised to a level with his face, holding the fore finger elevated as a signal for attention, and laughed aloud at what he deemed to be their imaginary sounds.

"Laugh if you will, boy," said Leather stocking; "the hounds are out, and be hunting a deer. No man can deceive me in such a matter. I wouldn't have had the thing happen for a beaver's skin. Not that I care for the law! but the venison is lean now, and the dumb things run the flesh off their bones for no good. Now do you hear the hounds?"

Edwards started, as a full cry broke on his ear, changing from the distant sounds that were caused by some intervening hill, to the confused echoes that rung among the rocks that the dogs

such a one as would turn a mill, if so useless a thing was wanted in the wilderness. But the hand that made that Leap,' never made a mill! There the water comes crooking and winding among the rocks, first so low that a trout could swim in it, and then starting and running just like any creature that wanted to make a far spring, till it gets to where the mountain divides, like the cleft foot of a deer, leaving a deep hollow for the brook to tumble into. The first pitch is nigh two hundred feet, and the water looks like flakes of driven snow, before it touches the bottom; and there the stream gathers together again for a new start, and maybe flutters over 50 feet of flat-rock, before it falls for another hundred, when it jumps about from shelf to shelf, first turning this away and then turning that away, striving to get out of the hollow, till it finally comes to the plain."

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"I never read a book in my life," said Leather stocking; "and how should a man who has lived in towns and schools know any thing about the wonders of the woods! No, no lad; there has that little stream of water been playing among them hills, since He made the world, and not a dozen white men have ever laid eyes on it. The rock sweeps like mason-work, in a half-round, on both sides of the fall, and shelves over the bottom for fifty feet: so that when I've been sitting at the foot of the first pitch, and my hounds have run into the caverns behind the sheet of water, they've looked no bigger than so many rabbits. To my judgment, lad, it's the best piece of work that I've met with in the woods; and none know how often the hand of God is seen in the wilderness, but them that rove it for a man's life."

"What becomes of the water? In which direction does it run? Is it a tributary of the Delaware?"

"Anan!" said Natty.

"Does the water run into the Delaware?"

"No, no, it's a drop for the old Hudson; and a merry time it has till it gets down off the mountain. I've sat on the shelving rock many a long hour, boy, and watched the bubbles as they shot by me, and thought how long it would be before that very water, which seemed made for the wilderness, would be under the



bottom of a vessel, and tossing in the salt sea. It is a spot to make a man solemnize. You can see right down into the valley that lies to the east of the High Peak, where, in the fall of the year, thousands of acres of woods are afore your eyes, in the deep hollow, and along the side of the mountain, painted like ten thousand rainbows, by no hand of man, though without the ordering of God's providence."

"Why, you are eloquent, Leather stocking!" exclaimed the youth.

"Anan!" repeated Natty.

"The recollection of the sight has warmed your blood, old man. How many years is it since you saw the place?"

The hunter made no reply; but, bending his ear near to the water, he sat for a minute, holding his breath, and listening attentively, as if to some distant sound. At length he raised his head, said—

"If I hand't fastened the hounds with my own hands, with a fresh leash of green buck-skin, I'd take a bible oath that I heard old Hector ringing his cry on the mountain."

"It is impossible," said Edwards; "it is not an hour since I saw him in his kennel."

By this time the attention of Mohegan was attracted to the sounds; but, notwithstanding the youth was both silent and attentive, he could hear nothing but the lowing of some cattle from the western hills. He looked at the old men, Natty sitting with his hand to his ear, like a trumpet, and Mohegan bending forward, with his arm raised to a level with his face, holding the fore finger elevated as a signal for attention, and laughed aloud at what he deemed to be their imaginary sounds.

"Laugh if you will, boy," said Leather stocking; "the hounds are out, and be hunting a deer. No man can deceive me in such a matter. I wouldn't have had the thing happen for a beaver's skin. Not that I care for the law! but the venison is lean now, and the dumb things run the flesh off their bones for no good. Now do you hear the hounds?"

Edwards started, as a full cry broke on his ear, changing from the distant sounds that were caused by some intervening hill, to the confused echoes that rung among the rocks that the dogs

were passing, and then directly to a deep and hollow baying that pealed under the forest on the lake shore. These variations in the tones of the hounds passed with amazing rapidity, and while his eyes were glancing along the margin of the water, a tearing of the branches of the alder and dog wood caught his attention, at a spot near them, and, at the next moment, a noble buck sprung on the shore, and buried himself in the lake. A full-mouthed cry, directly from the lungs of the hounds, followed when Hector and the slut shot through the opening in the bushes, and darted into the lake also, bearing their breasts most gallantly to the water.

"Oft in the full descending flood he tries  
To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides"

[Thompson.

"I knowe'd it—I know'd it!" cried Natty, when both deer and haunds were in full view;—"the buck has gone by them with the wind, and it has been too much for the poor rogues; but I mu't break them of these tricks, or they'll give me a deal of trouble. He ere, he ere—shore with you, rascals—shore with you—will ye?—Oh! off with you, old Hector, or I'll hatchel your hide with my ramrod when I get ye."

The dodgs knew their master's voice, and, after swimming in a circle, as if reluctant to give over the chase, and yet afraid to persevere, they finally obeyed, and returned to the land, where they filled the air with their howlings and cries.

In the mean time, the deer, urged by his fears, had swam over half the distance between the shore and the boats, before his terror permitted him to see the new danger. But at the sounds of Natty's voice he turned short in his course, and, for a few moments, seemed about to rush back again, and brave the dogs. His retreat in this direction was, however, effectually cut off, and, turning a second time, he urged his course obliquely for the centre of the lake with an intention of landing on the western shore. As the buck swam by the fishermen, raising his nose high into the air, curling the water before his slim neck like the beak of a galley, throwing his legs forward, and gliding along with incredible velocity, the Leather-stocking began to sit very uneasy in his canoe.



"Tis a noble creater!" he exclaimed; "what a pair of horns! a man might hang up all his garments on the branches. Lets me see—July is the last month, and the flesh must be getting good." While he was talking, Natty had instinctively employed himself in fastening the inner end of the bark rope that served him for a cable, to a paddle, and, rising suddenly on his legs, he cast his buoy away from him, and cried—"Strike out, John! let her go. The creater's a fool, to tempt a man in this way."

Mohegon threw the fastening of the youth's boat off the canoe, and, with one stroke of his paddle, sent the light bark over the water like a meteor.

"Hold!" exclaimed Edwards. "Remember the law my old friends. You are in plain sight of the village, and I know that Judge Temple is determined to prosecute all, indiscriminately, who kill the deer out of season."

But the remonstrance came too late; the canoe was already far from his skiff, and the two hunters too much engaged in the pursuit to listen to his voice.

The buck was now within fifty yards of his pursuers, cutting the water most gallantly, and snorting at each breath with his terror and his exertions, while the canoe seemed to dance over the waves, as it rose and fell with the undulations made by its own motion. Leather stocking raised his rifle and freshened the priming, but stood in suspense whether to slay his victim or not.

"Shall I, John, or no?" he said. "It seems but a poor advantage to take of the dumb thing, too. I won't; it has taken to the water on its own nater, which is the reason that God has given to a deer, and I will give it the lake play; so, John, lay out your arm, and mind the turn of the buck; its easy to catch them, but the'll turn like a snake."

The Indian laughed at the conceit of his friend, but continued to send the canoe forward, with a velocity that proceeded much more from his skill than his strength. Both of the old men now used the language of the Delawares when they spoke.

"Hoob!" exclaimed Mohegon; "the deer turns his head.—Hawk eye, lift your spear."

Natty never moved abroad without taking with him every impliment that might, by possibility be of service in his pursuits.

From his rifle he never parted; and although intending to fish with the line, the canoe was invariably furnished with all its utensils, even to its grate. This precaution grew out of the habits of the hunter, who was often led, by his necessities or his sports, far beyond the limits of this original destination. A few years earlier than the date of our tale, the Leatherstocking had left his hut on the shores of the Otsego, with his rifle and his hounds, for a few days hunting in the hills; but before he returned, he had seen the waters of the Ontario. One, two, or even three hundred miles, had once been nothing to his sinews, which were now a little stiffened by age. The hunter did as Mohegan advised, and prepared to strike a blow with the barbed weapon into the neck of the buck.

"Lay her more to the left, John," he cried, "lay her more to the left; another stroke of the paddle, and I have him."

While speaking, he raised the spear, and darted it from him like an arrow. At that instant, the buck turned. The long pole glanced by him, the iron striking against his horn, and buried itself, harmlessly, in the lake.

"Back water," cried Natty, as the canoe glided over the place where the spear had fallen, "hold water, John."

The pole soon re appeared, shooting upward from the lake, and as the hunter seized it in his hand, the Indian whirled the light canoe round where it lay, and renewed the chase. But this evolution gave the Buck a great advantage; and it also allowed time for Edwards to approach the scene of action.

"Hold your hand, Natty," cried the youth, "hold your hand, remember it is out of season."

This remonstrance was made as the batteau arrived close to where the deer was struggling with the water, his back now rising to the surface, now sinking beneath it, as the waves curled from his neck, the animal sustaining itself nobly against the odds.

"Hurrah!" shouted Edwards, inflamed beyond prudence at the sight; "mind him as he doubles—mind him as he doubles; sheer more to the right, Mohegan, more to the right, and I'll have him by the horns; I'll throw the rope over his antlers."



The dark eye of the old warrior was dancing in his head, with a wild animation, as bright and natural as the rays that shot from the glancing organs of the terrified deer himself, and the sluggish repose in which his aged frame had been resting in the canoe, was now changed to all the rapid inflections of a practised agility. The canoe whirled, with each cunning evolution of the chase, like a bubble floating in a whirlpool; and when the direction of the pursuit admitted, for a short distance, of a straight course, the little bark skimmed the lake with a velocity that urged the deer to seek its safety in some new and unexpected turn. The frequency of these circuitous movements, by confining the action to so small a compass, enabled the youth to keep near his companions. More than twenty times both the pursued and pursuers glided by him, just without the reach of his oars until he thought the best way to view the sport was to remain stationary, and by watching a favorable opportunity, assist as much as he could in taking their intended victim.

He was not required to wait long, for no sooner had he adopted this resolution, and risen in the boat, than he saw the deer coming bravely towards him, with an apparent intention of pushing for a point of land at some distance from the hounds, which were still barking and howling on the shore. Edwards caught the painter of his skiff, and, making a noose, cast it from him with all his force, and luckily succeeded in drawing its knot close around one of the antlers of the buck.

For one instant, the skiff was drawn through the water; but in the next the canoe glided before it, and Natty, bending low, passed his knife across the throat of the animal, whose blood directly followed the wound, dyeing the waters for many feet.—The short time that was passed in the last struggles of the animal, was spent by the hunters in bringing their boats together, and securing them in that position; when Leather stocking drew the deer from the water, and laid its lifeless form in the bottom of the canoe. He placed his hands on the ribs, and on different parts of the body of his prize, and then, raising his head, he laughed in his peculiar manner, saying, "So much for Marmaduke Temple's law!"

FROM THE COLUMBIAN MAGAZINE.  
ON SATIRE.

*"Mirth out of season is a grievous ill."*

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The want of knowledge and prudence in conducting a conversation, may subject a man to other injuries and inconveniences besides the discovery of thoughts and circumstances, proper to be concealed, and the publishing of which is a material disadvantage to him. According to a man's conversation, he establishes the character of an ill disposed and malicious person, or of a fool, or to use the softer phrase, *a very weak man, poor fellow*. The first is obtained by improper and cruel raillery and an indiscriminate exercise of a satirical vein, without any regard to the character or circumstances of the person attacked. The object is to raise a laugh, and at what expense is never considered. The blushes of the modest, the agonizing confusion and torment of the diffident, are but so many additional wreaths of triumph to twine round the inhuman tyrant's brow. Such a conduct, as the spectator observes is "a degree of murder." It, at first view, seems unaccountable, that such characters should receive any kind of countenance or support from the world. But true it is, that such characters are, in almost all companies, most noticed and sought after. I fear, this is owing to a bad principle in human nature—to a cruel gratification received from the pain of another;—and it is the more indulged, as we generally suppose, such raillery but promotes good-humor in a company, without materially injuring any. But this is a grand mistake, as every one knows who has ever experienced the disagreeable situation of being marked out as an object of derision for a whole company. The patrons too, of these heroes, act but with little policy and judgment; for while they are thus diverting themselves, at the expense of another, and inhumanly glutting themselves with the blood of modesty, they know not but what the indiscriminating arm of impudence and satire, is suspended over their own heads, and themselves will fall the next victim. Were these tyrannical usurpers of wit, who make no distinction between modest merit and forward folly, who cannot



attend to the wholesome advice of sparing the man, even should it be necessary to lash his vices, generally discountenanced and despised; then, and not till then, will all be safe from their depredations. But I believe there are some who earn this detestable character without quite deserving it; that is, they have not really wicked and malicious intentions, in the midst of the mischief they do, and believe they are only making a little innocent sport to preserve the company from an intolerable dullness, and have no idea that their conduct has consequences beyond the moment—they do not reflect that the damage done may be irreparable, that they may ruin the most promising prospects, and that genius is a tender plant, which, if damped in its rising vigour, and dealt roughly with while young, may be blasted forever. Even when nursed with the greatest attention, it sometimes fails. But mistakes of this kind, I fear, but seldom occur; injury, in some degree, is generally intended—and when one of these wits is told of such injury, he immediately cries out, *Who cares for it; if he is fool enough to get angry, he may, but the more he minds it the more he will be laughed at.* Cease fool! A man's feelings are not in his power, and he may blush at some of your impudent raillery, when he knows himself, above its reach, and is convinced that both you and your wit are rather objects of his contempt, than of his concern. "It is," says the spectator, "an unpardonable offence to show a man, you do not care whether he is pleased or displeased."

But if a person really speaks or acts triflingly or impudently, it is neither your business or advantage, to catch at every opportunity to render him ridiculous. The company have not appointed you their attorney-general to redress all their grievances, without either their command or consent, and perhaps to interrupt an improving and interesting conversation, merely that you may appear with brilliancy, and display talents, which, while thus exercised, are a disgrace to you. But the making another *look foolish*, is not always a proof that you have been witty; for the turning of the whole attention of the company upon him, may well have this effect, whatever be the circumstance which puts him in this disagreeable situation.

As we generally connect tenderness and delicacy with our ideas of the female character, this barbarous exercise of satirical talents, appears with tenfold blackness in a lady. And when a gentleman is the object of her raillery *it is cowardice to the last degree; the meanest and basest of cowardice.* A man appears not, is not, more mean and despicable, when he lifts his arm to abuse a woman, whom Nature, and her love for him, have thrown into his power; than a woman who endeavours to render a man ridiculous, who perhaps, is withheld from punishing with the bitterness of retort, only by that politeness and deference, perhaps I may say pity, which every gentleman feels and exercises, when he is treating with the softer sex, "the weaker vessel." Such a conduct is like beating and kicking a man, after you have effectually prevented any resistance or defence by tying his hands and feet. My lady would be terribly affected, should she read in some romance, that Don Rigmarole, after having treacherously got Don Prigmarole in his power, had tied him to a post, and wantonly pricked him with his sword of valour.

How far, in the case before mentioned, the rules of politeness bind a gentleman, I may consider another time. At present I am of opinion, that, when a lady thus bids defiance to decency, it is the duty of the gentleman to throw off the restraints of politeness; when she disregards the delicacy necessary in her sex, he is absolved from the observance of a conduct, which is due only to that delicacy.

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FROM THE TRENTON EMPORIUM,  
THE HERMITAGE.

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"Dear was to them the Hermitage  
Of this unplough'd, untrodden shore,  
Like birds all joyous from the cage,  
For man's neglect they lov'd it more."—CAMPBELL.

The first pleasure carriage that ever came to Alesbury, brought a couple of young adventurers from one of the seaboard towns. It was when I was a boy, and I well remember running down to the old Washington, then the only tavern in the town,



with my satchel over my shoulder to see the strangers; for in those days of peace and quietness, when the name of our village was scarcely known beyond a circle of ten miles round, it was a rare thing for us to see new faces. The visitors proved to be a gentleman, apparently about twenty-two, and one who looked several years younger, a beautiful creature, probably not more than seventeen; I was then too young to fix my attention upon the glance of a sunny eye, or the wave of a glossy ringlet; but I well remember that our village beaux said he was not handsome, and said it so anxiously that it was evident they felt themselves in danger of a rival; and that the little beauty was worshipped by every one of the fond mothers and rosy-cheeked daughters of the village.

Nothing of their history, their parentage, their former place of residence, or circumstances was known. Impertinent curiosity was, in those days, subjected to such rigid discipline whenever it appeared, by the common consent of the society of fathers, that it hid its head; and a stranger had to conduct in a meritorious manner to be esteemed, whatever might have been his previous situation. The behaviour of the young strangers was marked with so much modesty, their tempers appeared so amiable, and their whole deportment so winning, particularly that of the younger, that every tongue was let loose in their praise, even jealousy became liberal, and the inn keeper's daughter was said to have had more female visitors during the month they remained at Washington, than she had for a whole year before.

At the end of the time, however, the youngest stranger prepared to depart, and the eldest whose name was Gustavus, and who had spent much of his time in travelling thro' the country, announced his intention of settling in the neighbourhood. He left Alesbury, however, with his companion, and was gone three days at the expiration of which time he returned alone, and shortly after, having sold his carriage and some other little effects, he purchased a small island, in the river, containing about sixty acres, three miles below us, on which he erected a neat cottage, and commenced improving it with a spirit that seemed above his years.

He was beloved, and frequent parties were made up in the neighborhood to assist him, so that in three months he had a charming residence in the bosom of the waters, to which he gave the appellation of the Hermitage. Perhaps it was not mis-called, but it was a delightful place. The cottage was in the centre of the island, invisible for the trees that surrounded it, a gushing stream rose by the door and flowed in several channels to the river, the land was naturally meadow: and Gustavus, at a small expense possessed a retired but an enviable home. He appeared to enjoy it, for he was not to be seen any more in the village; and one day his boat was discovered gliding with him in it to the western shore; it remained there, fastened to a tree, three days and three nights. On the fourth day it returned; and bore him to the rural retreat he had prepared, with a young and lovely female. A variety of conjectures followed, but there was one which seemed to be strengthened by a thousand circumstances which had not heretofore been noticed—it was that the beautiful boy who had been his companion and friend; who had loved him and left him, was in reality the personage who now came to share his home, dressed in her proper garb; and claiming to the relation of a fond and fervent friend, the character of a wife.

Still the custom that forbid the prying scrutiny of curiosity, and that sought no further disclosure than such as were voluntarily made, prevailed. The strangers saw it, and testified their gratitude by throwing off their reserve. They lived in constant intercourse with the villagers for many years. The island became one of the best cultivated places in the country, and while a large and lovely family of children grew up around them, and a long residence endeared them to an extensive circle of acquaintance, the mysterious circumstances which took place at the time of their settlement, were almost forgotten.

Gustavus might possibly, in the lapse of fifteen or sixteen years have become rich, but his object seemed constantly to be, to attain simply to such an independence as would best promote his happiness. He was industrious, frugal, and managing; keeping aloof from every hazardous speculation, he was nevertheless prompt to profit by every opportunity which afforded the cer-



tainty of profit; and he denied himself none of the little delicacies and amusements of life, to save a trifling expense; he, on the other hand, expended nothing foolishly to gratify childish pride or a capricious whim. Go to the Hermitage when you would, every thing was in the neatest style, and you was sure to be entertained in the best manner—the most delicious fruit and the choicest pound cake, excellent cyder and a plenty of nuts, and what was better than all, smiles, that said as plain as smiles could say, ‘you are welcome,’ always awaited you. Thus this amiable family secured and enjoyed independence and happiness pure and without alloy.

At length, early in the spring of his sixteenth year’s residence at the Hermitage, Gustavus took a journey to the eastward; it was the first time he had been from home any distance, since his settlement among us. He remained abroad two months and brought with him when he returned, a pale, sickly, dejected looking boy, wearing a badge of mourning. A few days after, several of the aged villagers went down to the island to spend an afternoon and evening; and when, after tea, the little circle was formed on the green before the cottage door, Gustavus laid aside his flute, and thus addressed himself to the company:—

“I am about, my friends, to let you into the history of a portion of my life, with which you are unacquainted; this gratitude prompted me to do long ago, but prudence forbid it: now the necessity of silence does not exist. You knew not, sixteen years since, to whom you were opening the bosom of hospitality, when my young friend and myself received your welcome—we have lived happy with you—you know every incident of our lives since then, but you shall know more than this.

“My father was the wealthiest farmer in the county where he lived, and I was the eldest of two only sons. The parents of Matilda were our tenants; I became attached to her, and when I found that the penalty of marrying her was disinheritance, I chose to incur it. But persecution followed us not only from our home; it pursued us wherever we went, until in disguise, we effected our escape hither, and found repose where the arm of parental severity could no longer search out our retreat. I know that I only confirm your conjecture, when I add, that the

friend who accompanied me to Alesbury when I first came, now sits beside me—it was Matilda.

“My brother inherited the family estate, which was worth a hundred thousand at least; he increased his wealth by marrying a woman whose wealth was the only attraction she possessed; and while Matilda and myself were left to set out in life with but health and industry, he rolled in wealth.—But mark the issue. He, my unfortunate brother, died three months ago, bankrupt and broken hearted, of a disease the foundation of which, was laid by intemperate habits. His estate passed into the hands of gamblers, sharpers and horse jockies; and his wife absconded with a menial and left behind this poor child, beggared, and disgraced. While I,” and he raised his eyes to heaven in thankful adoration, as he said it, “am happy in the possession of a virtuous wife and family, and have all this,” pointing to his finely cultured lands and bleating flocks, “besides.”

What a lesson for the proud and grasping; How often is virtue, and all the noble and generous and delightful feelings of our nature sacrificed at the shrine of wealth! and how often does that wealth prove a curse to those whom it is intended to bless.

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### JUVENILE EXERCISES.

FROM LEXINGTON FEMALE ACADEMY.

#### THE MIND.

While life's bright path seems decked with flowers,  
While Fortune smiles and friends are kind,  
How quickly pass the joyous hours,  
How seldom think we of the Mind.

But, when of wealth and friends bereft,  
All former luxuries resigned,  
Ah! is there any blessing left?

Yes; one,—a pure enlightened Mind.

L. F. A.

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#### MEMORY,

BY A YOUNG LADY OF THIRTEEN.

Oh Memory! thou painful pleasure,  
All bend, alike, to thy control,  
To some thou prov'st a balmy treasure,  
“Pleasant, though mournful, to the soul.”

With thee,—we trace, past hours of gladness,  
When visions gay glanced o'er the mind;  
But shed a tear, and sigh in sadness,  
To find our brilliant hopes resigned.

L. F. A.